



Maryland Green Industries Council
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House Bill 387 - Pesticide Regulation - Transfer to Department of the Environment

Committee: Environment and Transportation

MaGIC Position: **OPPOSED**

The Maryland Green Industries Council, representing nursery, landscape, greenhouse, and arboriculture professionals is opposed to House Bill 387 – Pesticide Regulation – Transfer to the Department of Environment (MDE). This bill goes much further than only transferring the authority for pesticide regulation to MDE; it also impacts many programs that are extremely important to our industry including nursery inspection, weed management, plant protection and forest pest management.

This bill would move the nursery inspection program and pest quarantine from the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to MDE. The pest quarantine program is conducted through delegated authority from the US Dept of Agriculture APHIS program and transferring that program would cause severe delays in program implementation. Even transferring the same employees from MDA to MDE would require them to go through a reauthentication process with USDA which can take upwards of six months. Any delay in nursery inspection or issuance of permits for movement of nursery stock would be logistically and financially devastating to our industry.

Controlling and quickly quarantining any new pest that may show up in Maryland is integral to the future of the nursery, greenhouse and arboriculture industries in the state. Transferring authority for the plant and pest control program to MDE will cause a delay in the quarantine response process and potentially the loss of federal funds. When a new pest is found in the state, there is no time for delay. A recent example would be spotted lantern fly. This bill would be detrimental to the health and security of the plants our industry professional grow and care for.

This bill will also have a detrimental effect on the control of pests in our forests which will ultimately impact residential trees and arborists. MDA is currently responsible for control of forest pests such as the gypsy moth and emerald ash borer. Transferring this program and the training required along with potential lapse in federal funding would create delays that we cannot afford.

Finally, setting up a state process for pesticide regulation with MDE, MDA and DHMH to ban and make restricted use pesticides is duplicative of the US EPA process and incredibly resource intensive. MaGIC is confident in the federal regulatory framework and does not believe there is anything to be gained.

MaGIC opposes House Bill 387 and respectfully asks for your unfavorable report.

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